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1968

IN GRAND COMBINATION

**P.T. BARNUM & CO'S.**

GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH

AND THE GREAT LONDON CIRCUS



UNITED WITH

**ADAM FOREPAUGH'S**

NEW AND GREATEST ALL FEATURE SHOW

CIRCUSES, MENAGERIES, HIPPODROMES

AND ARTIFICIAL LAKE.

**MADISON SQUARE GARDEN**

MONDAY, MARCH 14<sup>TH</sup>

CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY





Vol. 12, No. 1

January-February 1968

Fred D. Pfening, Jr., Editor

Joseph T. Bradbury, Fred D. Pfening, III Associate Editors

Published bi-monthly by the Circus Historical Society, Inc. Publication, Advertising and Circulation office located at 2515 Dorset Rd., Columbus, Ohio 43221. Advertising rates: Full page \$35.00; Half page \$18.50; Quarter page \$10.00. Minimum ad \$8.00.

Annual subscription fees for the Bandwagon are \$6.00 and are due each May 1. Subscriptions received during the year will be charged the following: Those received in May-June, \$6.00; July-August \$5.00; September-October, \$4.00; November-December \$3.00; January-February, \$2.00 and March-April, \$1.00. Single copies \$1.00. Some back issues available at \$1.00 each.

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#### THIS MONTH'S COVER

An historic combination of circus titles occurred briefly in 1886 in Philadelphia, Penna. For a single stand running from April 26 to May 1, the P. T. Barnum Great London circus was united with the Adam Forepaugh show.

The following year the two shows again combined for a single stand in Madison Square Garden from March 14 to April 23, 1887.

Colorful advertising material was prepared for both of these engagements. The courier appearing on our cover was used for the 1887 stand in New York City. The original is in full color, printed by the Courier Litho Co., of Buffalo, N. Y., using familiar cuts from both the Barnum and Forepaugh shows. The original is from the Harold Dunn Collection.

#### JONESEY'S 'SNAPSHOTS'

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#### President's Comments

I appreciate the honor you have recently bestowed upon me by electing me your President for the next two years. With the help of the other officers, appointed officials and Divisional Directors we will try to maintain the standards of the Society and further its development.

In order to maintain and develop the Society each of you can be of help in many ways. We readily admit the Bandwagon is our stellar attraction but its fine continued performance depends upon the material collected by you and its appearance in the hands of our capable editors. Many members have contributed bits of information which

Freddie Daw's All-Circus Catalog, 3-hole punched for adding new pages when printed. Subscribers will receive 3-Ring Letters when published and all new pages FREE OF CHARGE. Send only \$3.00 to the address below for your subscription. Great for 1/4 scale model builders.

Freddie Daw Circus Hobby Hall  
245 Catalonia Ave. Coral Gables, 34, Fla.

has made the great coverages of the stories of the past more authentic as well as informative. Through our Regional Directors we could collect material on a sectional basis and when assembled will benefit everyone nationally.

While we are at Milwaukee for the Annual Circus Parade, maybe, this year, we could program one or two evenings before the Parade as CHS nights. One night for fun and fellowship and the other more formally programmed. This could be considered a National Convention since this is not an election year. However, this office would be very happy to receive invitations from any group of CHS members desirous of having us meet with them in a National Convention. Such requests must be submitted early so the membership can be advised through the Bandwagon and can plan their vacations accordingly. — Gaylord Hartman

#### NEW MEMBERS

- No. 1681 Allyn L. Pierson  
8 1/2 Lisle Ave.  
Binghamton, N. Y. 13901
- No. 1682 Paul L. Howes Jr.  
Route 1, Box 9  
Evergreen, Colo. 80439
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Battle Creek, Mich. 49015
- No. 1686 Albert L. Webb  
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Arcadia, Calif. 91006

#### CIRCUS FARM GATHERING

Paul Horsman advises that the second annual spring circus fans gathering at the Circus Farm, West Fryeburg, Maine, will be held the weekend before Memorial Day.

Featured this year will be a magician performing a large illusion.

All historians, fans and model builders are welcome.

#### MAIL AUCTION

First issues of RBBB programs, early issues of White Tops, Hagenbeck-Wallace programs, lithos, route cards, letterheads, photos, etc., auctioned to highest bidder. Buy at your price! Send 10c for auction list. HURRY! Bids close March 31.

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If you are on our regular mailing list (\$2 for a year; 10 mailings) you will receive these auction lists when they come out.

**WANTED** — Jim Beam china decanters (empty, of course) complete with stoppers and labels. Will swap circusiana for them and give you a good deal.



# TAXABLE VALUE OF CIRCUS GOODWILL

## INTRODUCTION

John M. Kelley was an amazing man. Born in 1873, he graduated from the University of Wisconsin Law School in 1903. In 1905 he was asked by Charles Ringling to defend the Ringling Circus in a lawsuit resulting from a blowdown of the show in Missouri. From that time on, until his retirement in 1937, he was attorney for the Ringlings and their massive circus empire. Had he died in 1937 his circus career would have still been quite distinguished; however, as the founder of the world famous Circus World Museum in Baraboo, Wisconsin, he gained the lasting admiration of lovers of the circus.

John M. Kelley died on 4 November 1963. His obituary in the November - December 1963, *Bandwagon* noted that his "finest hour" occurred on 4 July 1963, when he rode at the head of the first of the Milwaukee parades. If the great tribute paid to him in Milwaukee that hot July day wasn't the finest of his life, then his victory of the case presented here in defense of the Ringlings' estates before the Tax Division of the United States Treasury

Department in 1923 must have been the finest hour in his career as the *Circus Lawyer*.

This tax brief concerns the value of circus titles, and the estates of Henry and Alf. T. Ringling. In the case Kelley argued that a title "may be enormously valuable during the life of the owner, but it is of only nominal value for transfer, and its value is not ascertainable for tax purposes." (*Clipper*, 2 November 1923) *Variety* of 7 June 1923, reported that Kelley's efforts to devalue the Ringling title for economic reasons saved the heirs of Henry and Alf. T. Ringling from \$150,000 to \$200,000. Interestingly enough, Kelley's title argument of 1923 would be highly illogical today in light of the huge sum recently paid for the title, far more than anything else of the circus which employed Kelley for over thirty years.

The sources Kelley used for reference and research in this case are not known; however, it would appear that Louis E. Cooke gave Kelley some material. It would also appear that Kelley took a great deal of information out of circus route

books, particularly those of the Ringling show.

This is the fourth time since the original manuscript was presented to the courts in 1923 that the case has been reprinted for mass circulation. The first was in *Variety* for 10, 17, 30 May, and 7 June 1923. The 7 June issue described the work as "the most comprehensive and complete treatise on a given subject ever written in the theatrical world."

The *New York Clipper* ran the brief in nine weekly issues from 2 November to 28 December 1923. It called the paper "the most thorough history of the circus ever published."

The only other recent reproduction of the case besides this one was in *Banner Line* of 1 December 1964. That account had no supplementary notes as did the first two.

This reprint will be the first one to have edited the case to the extent of supplementary information, notes, and corrections. It is hoped it will be used by fans and historians as somewhat of an encyclopedia of the American Circus history. It is probably the most valuable reference document ever to appear in the *Bandwagon*.

by John M. Kelly  
edited by Fred D. Pfening, III

This brief deals only with the taxable good will value of the circus interests held by said decedents at the time of their death; paper and affidavits in connection with the taxable value of other property being filed separately.

The taxpayer takes the position that the good will interest (fractional) of the estates in the circus of Ringling Bros. co-partnership is of no more than nominal value and from the peculiar nature of the business is difficult of determination.

Henry Ringling died intestate, a citizen of Florida, October 11th, 1918.

Alf. T. Ringling died intestate, a citizen of New Jersey, October 21st, 1919.

Henry Ringling upon the date of his death held a one-fourth interest in the co-partnership property of the following circuses —



John M. Kelly as he appeared during his active years as legal counsel for the Ringling interests. Circus World Museum Collection.

Ringling Brothers World's Greatest Shows.

Barnum & Bailey Greatest Show on Earth.

Adam Forepaugh and Sells Bros. Enormous Shows United.

Alfred T. Ringling at the date of his death held a one-third interest in said circus properties.

Agreeable to the department the circus interests of both estates are together considered.

Upon the date of the death of Henry Ringling (Act of Sept. 8, 1916, as amended) provided a higher rate of tax than applied under the amended act (Revenue Act of 1918 — title IV, effective February 25, 1919) in effect at the date of death of said Alfred T. Ringling.

## Argument

Argument is based upon the following points:

1. (a) Surviving partners have the right to continue same business under the same name.





Henry Ringling

- (b) What is the transferable circus interest of the estate?
2. (a) To what does circus good will attach?
- (b) The rule or place of locality.
3. Successful operation of the circus depends upon professional skill and personal qualifications of partners.
4. The circus is an extraordinary hazard and is speculative.

#### POINT I

Surviving partners have the right to continue same business under the same name.

Mason v. Dawson, 37 N. Y. 90, 91;  
 Scudder v. Ames, 43 S. W. 659, 671;  
 Blake v. Barnes, 12 N. Y. S. 69;  
 2 Bates on Partnership, 605, 667, 673;  
 2 Lindley on Partnership, 652;  
 Moore v. Rawson, 199 Mass. 493, 497;  
 Douthart v. Logan, 60 N. E. 507;  
 Rowell v. Rowell, 122 Wis. 1, 18, 19;  
 Hutchinson v. Nay, 187 Mass. 262; 68 L. R. A. 186.

What is the transferable circus interest of the estate?

"The tax is not laid upon the property, but upon its transfer from the decedent to others."

U. S. Regulations, 37, Art. 1.

In instances where surviving partners continue the business in which the deceased partner held an interest, they may be forced to account only

for that which a court or hostile administrator could have sold to a stranger without the consent of the surviving partners and in hostility to their legal rights.

Rowell v. Rowell, 122 Wis. 1, 17.

What could the executor of the Ringling estate sell? Certainly not the exclusive right to conduct the circus under the name Ringling Bros. Neither would the executor have the right to sell a right or interest as successor to Ringling Bros. The surviving brothers are entitled to use their own names and the partnership name in the business. This is true in law. It has been true in fact. But two brothers out of five now survive. The surviving brothers have continued in the exclusive use of the partnership name. If the executor is thus limited there is little good will interest of the decedent of value capable of sale or transfer. There is authority for the proposition that the only kind of good will which may be transferred is that which connotes that exclusive right to carry on the old business name.

Lobeck v. Lee, 27 L. R. A. 795.

#### POINT II

To what does circus good will attach?

The circus sells nothing. It parts with nothing. It exhibits talent. Good will is not necessarily an incident of every business.

Met. Nat. Bank v. St. Louis Dispatch, 149 U. S. 436, 446;

Scudder v. Ames, 43 S. W. 659, 671.

The only theory upon which good will value may be established is that it applies to the name and reputation of Ringling Bros. It could not apply to any particular place. The circus is not a leasehold. The circus passes completely out of existence as far as place or locality is concerned when it moves off the lot.

Good will could not attach to the tangible property of the circus. It is merely an incident in the movement of the circus.

The principal income of the circus

A Ringling lion cage, photo taken in Algonia, Iowa in 1888 or 1890. Circus World Museum Collection.



Alfred T. Ringling

(held at Madison Square Garden, N. Y., and the Coliseum, Chicago) is derived from exhibitions given without either tents, wagons, railroad cars or other properties brought into use solely for transportation.

Good will cannot attach to a performance because a circus program not only must vary but must undergo complete change in direct contrast to the establishment of good will that attaches to a business dealing in commodities and articles of trade.

The matter of good will being so limited in its entirety, what value would there be to the fractional interest of the deceased capable of transfer?

Therefore while the principle may exist that there is some good will, yet the peculiar nature of the circus brings it within a special class where good will if any is without ascertainable or taxable value.

#### No Fixed Place or Location

Recent decisions discard the earlier rule that place or locality is essential in the establishment of good will. However, we believe the circus offers an exception.

It is special and unique. It is unlike any other enterprise. There is no other line of business that offers a true comparison.

It is common knowledge that a railroad strike, embargo, quarantine, crop failures and other contingencies that threaten the very life of the circus may affect but slightly the theatre, amusement park, or baseball that have a fixed location and are able to conduct advanced sales and issue rain checks. We cite in this connection the railroad strike of 1922 which virtually put several circuses out of business. To like effect restricted transportation during the war, labor troubles during the war and the recent quarantine during the spread of foot and mouth disease. During all of this time the theatre and baseball





and other lines of business having fixed locations were able to regularly carry on business. The circus can issue no rain check nor hold advance sales. If the day is lost all is lost that pertains to the given stand. Owing to the high maintenance cost, loss of a few stands with the circus very often takes away the profit for a season.

So that the law of place of locality is of particular importance and application to the circus.

"Circumstances surrounding each business should be taken into consideration in determining good will."

Marmaduke v. Brown, 98 Atl. 769.

"The legal definition of good will will disappoint one and only complete study of more than a score of theories will give one a full understanding of legal good will."

Columbia Law Review, No., 1922.

### POINT III

Successful operation of the circus depends upon professional skill and personal qualifications.

"There can be no Good Will in a business depending upon professional qualities or personal characteristics of the persons who carry it on."

Masters v. Brooks, 132 App. Div. 874, 880;

Slack v. Suddoth, 45 L. R. A. (Tenn.) 589;

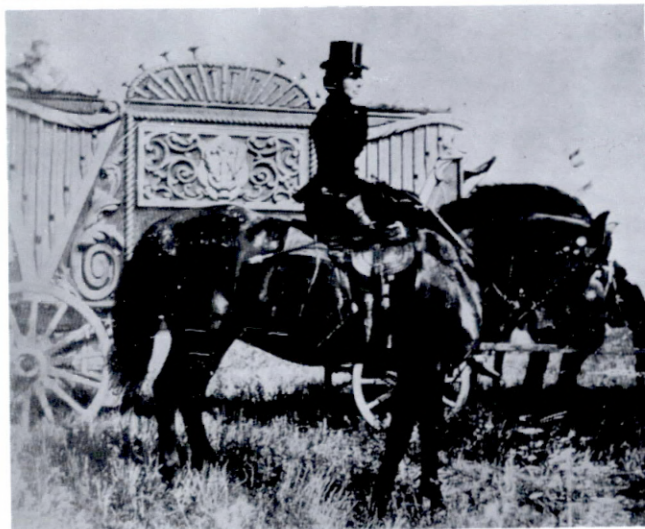
Kremelberg v. Thompson, 103 Atl. (N. J.) (1917) 525;

Shelton v. Houghton, 21 Fed. Case 12, 748;

Douthard v. Logan, 85 Ill. App. 294.

"While a firm name may in some cases be deemed a part of the Good Will of the business, it is not in itself necessarily so, and cannot be in cases of business which depend on the per-

Mrs. Al Ringling, shown in front of the first Ringling calliope. This photo was taken in 1889, the wagon was dismantled in 1891. McClintock Collection.



sonal attributes of the partners engaged therein, such as professional partnerships or banking and brokerage partnerships, in which the name has become a symbol denoting the personal integrity and business qualities of the partners."

Red v. McKay, 95 N. Y. S. 935 (1905).

In the case of McCall v. Moschwitz, 14 Daly 16, 40, the court (referring to the defendant, whose business was that of a dressmaker) said:

"We think that this good-will depends so largely on the skill of the defendant, that it is no more the property of the co-partnership, or the subject of sale, than would be the good will of an attorney's business or that of an artist."

And in the case of Mullin v. Mullin, 96 Atl. 996, 998 (N. J. Ct. of Errors and Appeals — 1916), the court said

(referring to an undertaking business):

"We think it is doubtful whether, in a business of that character, consisting of personal services, and evidently dependent largely, if not entirely, upon the personal characteristics of the individual, there could be any good will as late even as four or five years after a man's death."

"Professional skill, experience and reputation are things which cannot be bought or sold. They constitute part of the individuality of the particular person and die with him."

Mandeville v. Harmon, 7 Atl. 37, 40;

In Re Caldwell, 107 Misc. 316.

Confidence in the Personal Integrity and Skill of the Ringlings is Misinterpreted for Good Will.

As an illustration, the good will of a department store or a bank is established upon the basis of public confidence in the continuation of the same standard or character of dealings; maintenance of the same quality of goods or merchandise. In the circus the rule is inversed. The public looks not for the same entertainment but for something novel and new. Patronage rests upon the insecurity of expectation in novelty. There is no uniform trade or patronage the same as we find in industry where good will is a factor. Of approximately 500 available circus cities and towns only a few are visited annually by any circus. The greater number are visited once every two years or three years. The circus for the most part has identity or contact with the people in a town but one day in about three years and the programme of entertainment for which the public pay to see is materially changed at every visit. To say that upon this

The midway of the Ringling show in Washington D.C., in 1898. Circus World Museum Collection.







Twenty-four of the Ringling elephants are shown with the short stock and elephant cars used around 1900. Woodcock Collection.

condition good will should be established and valued upon the same basis that applies to industrial concerns is absurd. While there may be technically an element of good will, the fact remains that it is most difficult of ascertainment and in any sense no more than nominal.

Every circus that goes out makes its appeal for patronage on the claim of having something new — and consequently untried. At best it is an experiment — so much so that the history of circuses (Brief, Part II.) discloses an overwhelming majority of failures. The principles of merchandising and trade development upon which good will is built are completely reversed in the circus business. What is commonly accepted as good will in the circus name of Ringlings is more correctly interpreted as confidence of the public in their professional ability and skill to present exceptional, clean, dependable entertainment.

#### **The Name Ringling in the Circus Business Has Become a Symbol Denoting Personal Qualities and Skill.**

The Ringling circus is not merely a big property equipment of 100 cars. Any showman may construct or duplicate the physical property or hire it built. The Ringling circus embodies the genius and personality of the Ringlings. It is their finesse in amusement creations and features; their judgment in selecting a program of entertainment; their sense of economy in building and their wisdom in routing the show — that impart value to the institution. The alterations Ringlings make in a program of entertainment; what they reject; the snap and action they develop in the acts presented; the harmony and "balance" among acts which make up a Ringling program; their principle of clean entertainment — freedom from all objectionable features that so often disintegrate outdoor amusements; their personality in preserving the morale of the organization;

the inspiration in their leadership — all these intensely personal qualities constitute Ringling individuality and give value to the enterprise. These qualities are not capable of transfer by sale, gift, or inheritance.

#### **POINT IV**

#### **Circus a great hazard — burdens extraordinary that rest upon the circus.**

So great is the hazard entailed in the operation of the circus that it is more properly classed as a venture than a business.

The circus has never been a paying investment. It is not attractive to capital. Of the total number of circuses that have exhibited in America an overwhelming majority have been complete failures (see list, Part II.).

Of hazards peculiar to the circus we mention the following:

(a) The circus upon the railroads is not transported as common carrier and consequently does not enjoy the advantages or the protection afforded those who ship or travel as common carrier. Circus transportation is handled through private arrangement.

(b) The circus is not protected by liability insurance. The extraordinary risks impose prohibitive rates.

(c) In the seven months of the year that the circus operates, much of its property is entirely lost through exhaustion in the process of wear and tear.

(d) Industrial strikes, transportation tie-up through railroad strikes, floods, epidemic, quarantine, crop failure — all spell disaster to the circus, often to the extent of putting it out of business.

(e) Great cost of maintenance, buying of supplies and making repairs at traveling disadvantage. Casualty among animals and live stock. Loss of property incident to circus move-

ment accomplished within the shortest possible space of time often under distressing circumstances without alternative.

#### **Important Distinction Between Shows of Ringling Class and Small Shows — Capacity of Showman Determines Size, Success and Value of Show.**

The big show class of the Ringling enterprises presents problems not common to other circuses now operating as one train outfits. Very often if the small circus were compelled to exhibit on locations available to the big show it would not survive. The small circus may be able to exhibit in the heart of a city with exceptional advantages compared with the big circus crowded to and often beyond the city limits. There is involved an endless variety of harrassing circumstances not common to ordinary business that threatens the very life and existence of the big circus.

#### **Distinction in Character of Entertainment**

For a generation the Ringling enterprises alone have carried extravagant spectacles, pageants and creations, the expense and maintenance of which is prohibitive to the smaller circus.

Once a big show always a big show — or it passes out. History proves that established patronage of a big circus is held only by maintaining the equipment and the entertainment at par. The circus cannot be reduced in size nor the entertainment lowered in quality. Such attempts have resulted disastrously (see Brief, Part II. — Adam Forepaugh Circus, Sells Bros. Circus).

Accordingly the man successful with the small circus may find himself an utter failure with the organization problems, transportation problems and the entertainment features of the big circus (see Part II. — Campbell Bros. Circus; La Pearl Circus; Mighty Haag; Bob Hunting



Shows; Wheeler Bros. Shows; Orton Bros. Circus).

#### Railroad Transportation

Constantly increasing congestion on the railroads, strikes, quarantine, and other ever threatening risks have brought to the big circus owner a problem that is intensely critical. It needs no argument to point out the added burden of transportation that obtains in the movement of a five-train circus with its displacement upon the tracks as compared with the one-train circus.

#### The 100-Car Circus

The Ringling Bros. & Barnum & Bailey Circus comprise 100 extra-length special railroad cars handled daily by the railroads in four trains — frequently five trains. For a generation no other circus has built beyond the two-train class. No other person in history ever transported a circus outfit equal in size to 60 per cent of this circus.

No other men in history have ever moved an amusement enterprise even for a single day comparable in size to what the Ringlings transport and operate successfully every day in the season.

No general, or army, or government even in times of military trial or emergency, ever matched in achievement — either in the handling and movement of property equipment or in economy of operations — what Ringling Brothers accomplish daily with the circus.

#### Limitations Upon the Size of Circus Outfits. Why Have We Only One Circus of the Ringling Class?

The main entrance doors must open on time. This is the keynote of circus success. Circus owners are constantly on their guard lest cumbersome equipment and oversize outfit impede transportation beyond the ability of the organization to handle on schedule time. This condition is always intensely critical to the showman, because even with the well balanced outfit, frequent damaging delays are

occasioned through bad weather, railroad tie-ups and a thousand mishaps common to the circus.

The grinding process of conducting a circus about the country with incident losses and tremendous maintenance expense; building a tented city every morning; pulling it down and transporting it during the night; being prepared and equipped to handle, safeguard and entertain at unfamiliar places vast crowds "twice daily rain or shine" — very decisively and unmistakably determine for every circus owner just how big he can build his show and profitably operate it.

If it were possible for circus men personally to handle with profit bigger outfits than are on the road now, they would be put out. It is not a question of capital or lack of ambition. It is a free field. The determining factors are management, leadership, plus the showman's genius and skill.

Circus history reveals that showmen will successfully handle an outfit up to a given size. Beyond that ambition has led the venturesome where two titles unhappily predominate in circus history — "Seized by the Sheriff," and "SOLD AT AUCTION."

There is the proverbial straw that always "breaks the camel's back." In circus history it is the added camel that has "broken" the showman's back. Just so big, so good. It is a wise showman that recognizes his limitations in show buildings. One cannot grow bigger and better "day by day in every way" in the circus business.

#### PART II

##### List of circuses that have exhibited in America.

No attempt is made to present a history or professional record in detail of the different circuses, or their owners or founders.

The full lot of a 1906 stand of the Ringling show in Red Wing, Minn. The parade was uptown when the photo was taken. Burt Wilson Collection.

In support of our contention that Good Will in the circus is due to the professional skill, genius and personality of the showman, we offer brief statements of fact touching upon the business career, success or failure of circuses that have covered the field of outdoor amusements.

This list is submitted further in support of the contention that the circus is an extraordinary hazard and speculative.

This list includes all of the circuses of any consequence that have been before the public in America.

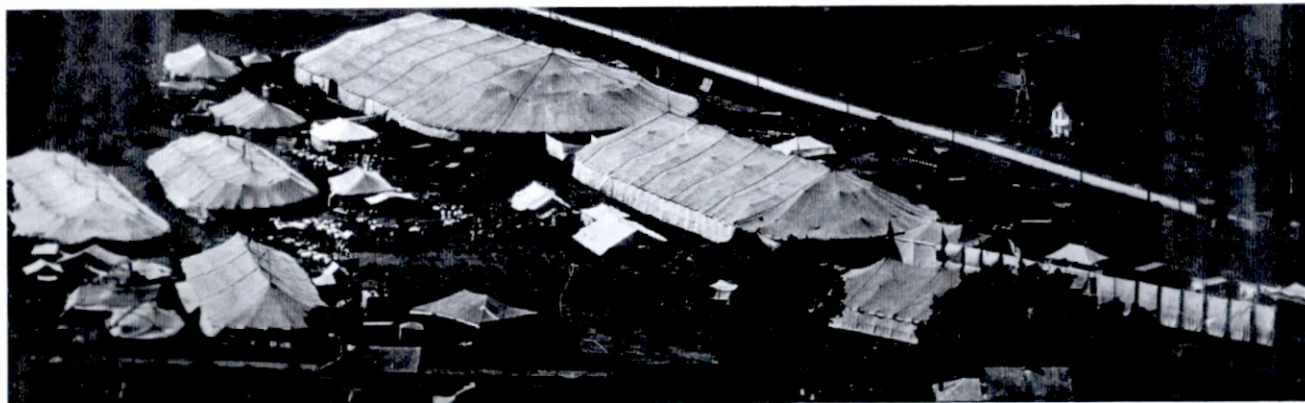
#### Ringling Brothers

The world looks upon the circus as a holiday. The blare of the band, the antics of the clown, the feats of skill that entertain and delight, dispel serious minded impressions of what the task means to those who build and move the show. Therefore, while not attempting any history of the Ringling Brothers, it is essential to make such brief reference to their intensely interesting career as to indicate the importance of personal service, genius and individuality, in the success of their circus.

Ringling Brothers circus came into being in 1884. Five Ringling Brothers — Al, Alf. T., Otto, Charles and John — on an open lot in their own home town — Baraboo, Wis. — May 19th, 1884, founded their circus and opened the doors to Ringling entertainment. It is now on the road in its fortieth season. Every succeeding year it goes out improved and enlarged — a standard leader in the field of outdoor amusement. On March 31st, 1911, Mr. Otto Ringling died, whereupon Mr. Henry Ringling, a brother, succeeded him in the partnership. January 1st, 1916, Mr. Al. Ringling, eldest of the brothers, died. On October 11th, 1918, Mr. Henry Ringling died. On October 21st, 1919, Mr. Alf. T. Ringling died. Two brothers survive — Charles and John.

#### A Partnership Among Brothers

No person outside the family ever





held an interest. Ringling boys, as they were known in 1884, founded their circus in a dream. From a dream it became an experiment—from an experiment an established institution. Scarcely any business is as promiscuous in its intercourse or dealings about the country, or so dependent for its existence upon technical mastery of detail and strict economy in operation. Yet the Ringling Brothers partnership began without written articles and has continued forty years in business without the scratch of a pen to define agreement. It is one of the greatest examples the world has known of the Golden Rule in business.

### Building a Circus

The property equipment of Ringling Brothers when they set out in 1884 involved no imposing inventory. Their canvas equipment scarcely equalled what college boys now use on vacation. After being on the road three years with a wagon show their outfit was still so meagre that the menagerie featured the importance of an eagle, a donkey and a Shetland pony. They traveled eight thousand miles with a wagon show and gave over one thousand exhibitions before they had an elephant.

They began without capital, credit or business prospect. No prestige in the circus came to them either through birth or association. They served no apprenticeship and the community in which they grew up was isolated and far removed from the atmosphere of amusement life.

Furthermore, the Ringlings ventured in the circus at a time when the field of outdoor amusement numbered more master showmen than any other generation in history. Barnum was heyday in his career. Bailey was fast approaching the top of the ladder, and in front rank were the Cole Show, the Forepaugh Show and the Sells Brothers Circus. Scarcely any venture in the world offered as little prospect of reward as the circus when the Ringlings entered the field. Yet there existed at the time, of which they were unaware, two important factors chiefly responsible for their success. One was the intangible assets of the firm—their good bringing-up, robust constitution, striking personality, courage, high moral viewpoint and loyalty to each other. The other helpful factor was the stage of the country's development. Railroads were fast penetrating the Western country and everywhere towns and cities were in the building. Exhibition grounds were easily had; labor and materials were cheap. Compared to present days, there were fewer taxes, fewer restrictions and opportunity was wider to those who risked their fortunes on the circus lot.



Ringling Bros. achievement is an inspiration. Their career affords interesting contrast to the spirit of unrest now broadcast in the world. The value of apprenticeship is today dis-

The polar bear den and hipp den, as well as other parade wagons used during the 1916 season. Pfening Collection.



counted in the disturbing craze for quick returns. For practically a quarter of a century every dollar that Ringling Bros. took from the circus was put back in building up the show. The partners received no salaries; no profits were shared. During the first twenty-five years in business, they spent the winter months in rented homes, working under the intensely exacting demands of the business in order that the show might out the following spring "bigger and better than ever before."

The Ringlings undertook the building of their show at a time and in a day when men were willing to accept adversities and struggle and persevere for a common object, practice economies and endure hardships, that are today looked upon as impossible business standards.

There were often sacrifice of means, sacrifice of comforts—but never a sacrifice of principle. The lofty plan upon which the Ringling circus was founded has never been surrendered. Ringling success is a testimonial to the code of honor and honest methods that have ever prevailed in Ringling enterprises.

If we are to measure the success of an enterprise by its return in money, it may be said that if the Ringlings at any time during the first twenty years of their career had retired, the world would have judged them failures. It has been said that the best time to "hold on" is when you reach the point where the average fellow would quit. Ringling Bros. in their chosen pursuit never learned how to accept defeat. Few there are who would accept the service and responsibility imposed by the circus even for a single season, regardless of its return in money. The Ringling Bros. continuously building bigger and better have never let up or let go for forty years. Their shows have traveled an equivalent of thirty times around the earth. They have given over nineteen thousand circus exhibitions with one or more of the Ringlings in personal command. Their achievement is convincing proof that there is no prospect so feeble and no





An outdoor corral menagerie of the Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows, probably taken around 1910. Pfening Collection.

line of honest endeavor open to the energies of men, but what will ultimately bring reward if there is the determination to see it through.

And so the Ringlings built their show from the "ground" up. They learned where and how to buy—and how to build in harmony with their ability to operate. If the big shows that go out today were to do their building, buying and contracting along the lines commonly employed in industry, they could not exist. They would crumble beneath the weight of overhead. Hence, it is that when a contract is made by the Ringling Show, whether for a season's advertising, costumes for a ballet, a lot to exhibit on, or a bovalapus for the menagerie, it may be counted upon that they know what and how and where to buy. In this very essential phase of the circus (there is constant wear and constant replacement) every Ringling has back of him not five or ten or even twenty years experience—but he traces forty years of personal service in proprietary circus building and operation, for comparisons and guidance.

It is by reason of these economies constantly effected in all the endless variety of operations, that the Ringling Circus in its huge proportions is able to exist. This is why the circus becomes intensely personal to its owner. This is one of the reasons why there is but one show of the Ringling class.

#### Moving a Circus

In the movement of a circus, much is expected in the service of men. Many have seen a circus "put up" but few see it taken off the lot. Perhaps this one phase of circus movement may serve to show the extraordinary problems involved. Those who have seen the "pole" wagon or "canvas" wagon leave the lot on a

rainy night understand somewhat of the service required. The hookrope and the goose-neck have their meaning to the showman. Likewise significant are the 36-horse teams forging ponderous wagons through a canal of mud; acres of canvas rolled on the ground by hand; the water spout as a trusty elephant jams head first a huge bulk of water-soaked canvas in the task of loading it in wagons. And with it all, as if to add discouragement, the task comes late of night when the world sleeps. There is isolation, darkness, lack of fireside, lack of dry clothing and the comforts common among men. It is an extraordinary emergency. The performance of the task calls for the best that is in the strongest of men. But always there is a Ringling out on the lot, until the last wagon moves off.

Indisposition or a headache may close the desk or office of the average business man. His work can wait until another day. But no task is looked upon as impossible in the circus. And so the caravan moves on with a thousand men of steel. Sleep comes easily in the grind. They awaken in a new town—the sun shines—the tents are dried—the wrinkles in wet clothing are smoothed out in the service of another day. The whistle blows, the bands play, new faces appear and huge crowds again jam the big tented arena. It is a big show and it moves on.

By what influence are men induced to perform this task?

How is organization preserved under these distressing circumstances? In the answer are found reasons why we have so many small circuses and so few big ones. This is where leadership of the Ringlings is recognized.

#### Ringling Leadership

A circus may fail through accident but no circus ever came into prominence by accident or by the miracle route. It is a slow building process of expanding little by little on the year by year plan. What Ringling Brothers have accomplished is traceable to various supporting reasons, chief among them, their leadership. Ringling Brothers in the early days brought together a number of men who, aside from being suited to the extraordinary task of the circus, proved themselves notably trustworthy and loyal. The loyalty of these men to the Ringlings, while remarkable, is nevertheless reciprocal. It is characteristic of the Ringlings to suggest no service which they are not ready and willing and able to perform themselves. Men of the Ringling organization stick to the end. It would be impossible to conduct this big circus through an organization collected from men outside the Ringling enterprise today.

Tact and diplomacy—these qualities the Ringlings possess in a remarkable degree. With one, so with all. The value of these personal qualities is manifest in their business dealings. Its influence is apparent in every phase of their personal contact. Ringling circus moves by reason of Ringling organization, and Ringling organization is preserved through Ringling leadership.

The foregoing details and features inseparably connected with the big circus may serve to point out the genius, skill and personal service of the Ringling Brothers responsible for the success of their enterprises.

Calendar and Routes and Exhibitions—Ringling Circuses—1884-1923

1884

Yankee Robinson and Ringling Bros.



Great Double Shows, Circus and Caravan.

Proprietors: Al. Ringling, Alf. T. Ringling, Otto Ringling, Charles Ringling and John Ringling.

Opened at Baraboo, Wis., May 19th.

Wagon show. The main tent canvas was 45 x 90 feet; side show canvas, 30 x 45 feet, 22 horses, 11 wagons. Admission, 25 cents.

No band wagon; no menagerie; no wild animals.

1885

Ringling Bros. Great Double Shows, Circus, Caravan and Trained Animal Exposition.

Opened at Baraboo, Wis., May 18th.

A band wagon was added to the parade and the tents slightly enlarged.

1886

Ringling Bros. Great Double Shows and Congress of Wild and Trained Animals.

Opened at Baraboo, Wis., May 15th.

The "Big top" was enlarged to 90 feet and a 30 foot middle piece added during the summer. Side show enlarged to 75 x 45 feet.

Admission, 25 cents.

The outfit now consisted of 18 wagons which included band wagon, ticket wagon and two cages. The menagerie consisted of a hyena, a bear, a few monkeys and an eagle. A donkey and a Shetland pony were purchased, giving first trick act with show.

1887

Ringling Bros. United Monster Shows, Great Double Circus, Royal European Menagerie, Museum, Caravan and Congress of Trained Animals.

Opened at Baraboo, Wis., May 7th.

A 70 foot menagerie was added and the outfit went out on wagons with sixty horses. The menagerie now consisted of an elk, a bear, 2 lions, a kangaroo, a hyena, a deer, 4 Shetland ponies, birds and monkeys. A camel added during the summer died before close of season.

1888

Ringling Bros. Stupendous Consolidation of Seven Monster Shows.

Opened at Baraboo, Wis., May 5.

The admission went to fifty cents. The main tent canvas was enlarged to 100 x 148 feet. During the winter the first two elephants of the Ringling Circus were purchased. Upon their arrival at Baraboo, John Ringling who had been with the Ringling Winter Carnival Co. left five days before its close and rushed home to "see the elephants." 1888 was a severe test upon the enterprise. Carrying an equipment much enlarged the outfit struggled constantly for six weeks in rain and mud. The sun did not shine upon the show for four



weeks. Three weeks out, the admission went back to 25 cents. Upon the seventh succeeding stand it went back to 50 cents. The outfit stuck the season through and reached winter quarters October 14th.

1889

Ringling Bros. and Van Amburgh's United Monster Circus, Museum, Menagerie, Roman Hippodrome and Universal World's Exposition.

Opened at Baraboo, Wis., May 4th.

The name Van Amburgh, leased at a small rental, was carried for this season only.

1890

Ringling Bros. United Monster Railroad Shows, Great Triple Circus, Museum, Menagerie, Roman Hippodrome and Universal World's Exposition.

Opened at Baraboo, Wis., May 3rd.

The first Ringling railroad show, 18 cars. It carried 2 tableaux wagons, 1 ticket wagon, 2 band wagons and 15 cages. It carried 107 horses, 3 elephants, 3 camels, 4 lions, 2 cubs, 2 leopards, a zebra, a zebu, a hippopotamus, 4 kangaroos, 2 black wolves, a tapir, an antelope, 2 deer, 2 boa constrictors and a bovalapus.

1891

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Railroad Shows, Real Roman Hippodrome, 3 Ring Circus and Elevated Stages, Millionaire Menagerie, Museum and Aquarium and Spectacular Tournament Production of Caesar's Triumphal Entry Into Rome.

Opened at Baraboo, Wis., May 2nd.

Went out as a 22 car railroad show.

1892

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest

Shows — Three Rings, One Stage, Hippodrome.

Opened at Baraboo, Wis., April 30th.

28 car show. 3 advertising cars. 18 cages. The menagerie this season went out minus the bovalapus but carried 6 elephants, 6 camels and a hippopotamus.

1893

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows.

Opened at Baraboo, Wis., April 29th.

38 car show; 3 bands and a calliope in parade; 207 horses were carried; 20 cages; 7 elephants; 3 camels and the first giraffe of the show.

1894

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows.

Opened at Baraboo, Wis., April 28th, a 43 car show.

1895

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows.

Opened the season at Tattersall, Chicago, April 6th.

Illuminated night parade at Chicago was given for 3 successive nights prior to opening. This was the first illuminated circus night parade ever made in Chicago and the first presentation in a building in Chicago of a circus menagerie and hippodrome. The circus with two rings and one stage was conducted with much success.

This year the Ringling Circus for the first time exhibited in Chicago, St. Louis and Boston. It was the first extensive eastern trip.

1896

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows.

Opened a 47 car show at Tattersall, Chicago, April 11th.

This was the year Barnum & Bailey purchased an interest in the Sells Bros. show, the combination going out as Forepaugh & Sells Bros. This season the Ringling Circus played opposition to Forepaugh & Sells in more than 45 stands.

1897

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows.

Opened at Tattersalls, Chicago, April 10th.

53 cars; 22 elephants and 30 cages.

1898

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows.

Opened in Coliseum, St. Louis, April 11th.

The John Robinson Greatest of All American Shows.

Opened at Baraboo, Wis., April 27th.

Robinson Circus property leased by Ringling Bros. and operated for this season. 24 car circus; equipment made



up in part from Robinson property and Ringling Bros. property. At close of season Robinson circus property shipped back to Cincinnati.

1899

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows.

Opened at Tattersall, Chicago, April 15th.

Washington and Oregon were visited for the first time. The circus put on special features, among them a 61 horse act. Show increased in size and business improved.

1900

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows.

Opened at Wheeling, W. Va., April 19th.

Show traveled from Atlantic to Pacific; exhibited in 28 states, 2 territories and British Columbia and made its first trip to California.

1901

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows.

Opened at Coliseum, Chicago, April 10th.

1902

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows.

Opened at Coliseum, Chicago, April 9th.

1903

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows and Spectacles.

Opened at Coliseum, Chicago, April 9th.

1904

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows and Spectacle, Jerusalem and the Crusades.

Opened at Coliseum, Chicago March 30th.

1905

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows and Spectacle, the Field of the Cloth of Gold.

Opened at Coliseum, Chicago, April 8th.

Adam Forepaugh & Sells Bros. enormous United Shows.

Opened at Columbus, O., April 22nd. Operated by Ringling Bros. Owned jointly by Ringling Bros. and James A. Bailey.

1906

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows and Spectacle, the Field of the Cloth of Gold.

Opened at Coliseum, Chicago, April 5th.

Adam Forepaugh & Sells Bros. Enormous United Shows.

Opened at Columbus, O., April 21st. July 1st Ringling Bros. purchased the one half interest of Bailey, completing their ownership in this circus.

1907

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows.

Opened at Coliseum, Chicago, April 4th.

Adam Forepaugh & Sells Bros. Enormous Shows United.

Ringling Bros. sole owners and proprietors.

Opened at Columbus, O., April 20th.

At close of season show moved to winter quarters of Ringling Bros. at Baraboo, Wis.

1908

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows.

Opened at Coliseum, Chicago, April 2nd.

Barnum & Bailey Greatest Show on Earth.

Ringling Bros. sole owners by purchase fall of 1907.

Opened at Madison Square Garden, N. Y., March 19th.

1909

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows.

Opened at Madison Square Garden, N. Y., March 25th.

Barnum & Bailey Greatest Show on Earth.

Opened at Coliseum, Chicago, April 1st.

1910

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows.

Opened at Coliseum, Chicago, April 7th.

Barnum & Bailey Greatest Show on Earth.

Opened at Madison Square Garden, N. Y., March 24th.

Adam Forepaugh & Sells Bros. Enormous Shows United.

Opened at Springfield, O., April 23rd.

1911

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows. An 84 car show.

Opened at Coliseum, Chicago, April 1st.

Barnum & Bailey Greatest Show on Earth. An 84 car show.

Opened at Madison Square Garden, N. Y., March 23rd.

Adam Forepaugh & Sells Bros. Enormous Shows United.

Opened at Vincennes, Ind., April 26th. A 50 car show.

1912

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows and Spectacle Joan of Arc.

Opened at Coliseum, Chicago, April 6th.

Barnum & Bailey Greatest Show on Earth and Spectacle Cleopatra.

Opened at Madison Square Garden, N. Y., March 21st.

1913

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows and Spectacle Joan of Arc.

Opened at Coliseum, Chicago, April 5th.

Barnum & Bailey Greatest Show on Earth and Spectacle Cleopatra.

Opened at Madison Square Garden, N. Y., March 22nd.

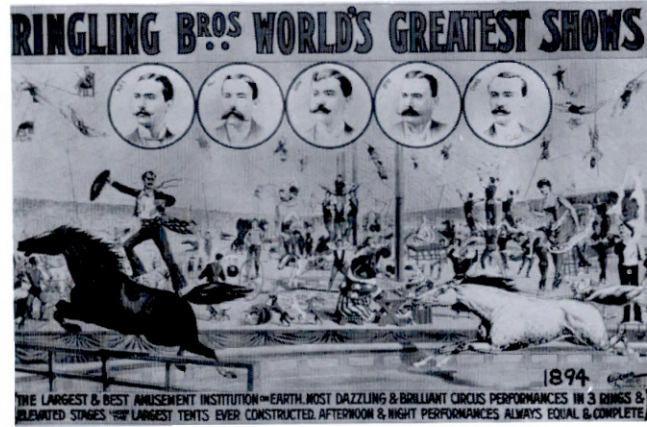
1914

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows and Spectacle Solomon and the Queen of Sheba.

Opened at Coliseum, Chicago, April 11th.

Barnum & Bailey Greatest Show on Earth and Spectacle the Wizard Prince of Arabia.

Opened at Madison Square Garden, N. Y., March 21st.





# CIRCUS ADVERTISING ADVA



The American circus has used posters as advertising, since its beginning. They were printed in black until about 1849, when a color poster was used in the Richard Sands show.

As more efficient printing became available the shows increased the amount of posters as well as the number of men to post them. The first large billboard was posted in Chicago, Illinois, in 1854, it consisted of 100 sheets advertising the engagement of Spalding & Rogers.

A day's supply of paper was carried in a covered wagon drawn by two horses, in those early days. As the shows increased in size and moved by rail circuses began using railroad coaches outfitted specially to sleep the crew and store a large quantity of paper. As many as five different cars were used by some shows. In 1890 Barnum & Bailey No. 1 car traveled six weeks ahead of the show, with the No. 2 car two weeks ahead posting 5,000 sheets in the city and

The Golden Bros. car season of 1924, although marked Car No. 2, the show used but one car. Woodcock Collection.

surrounding countryside. The other three cars followed as late as a week before show day, and were sent in to cities where opposition was strong. In all 17,000 to 20,000 sheets were posted for each stand. Special billboards were often erected just for the circus paper.

Most of the outdoor billing stands used designs of paper up to 24 sheets in size, but a few shows had posters as large as 64 sheets. The largest single design known was a 100 sheet bill used by the W. W. Cole Circus, it measured about 15 ft. high and 60 ft. long.

Every rail show had an advance car that traveled in passenger service usually two weeks ahead of the show. These were often highly decorated. A number of these interesting advance cars are shown here.—FDP, Jr.



The No. 1 car of the Norris in 1910 was of the single design. Pfening Collection.



The 14 man crew of the No. 2 car of Downie & Wheeler Show stand in front of their car in 1912. Pfening Collection.

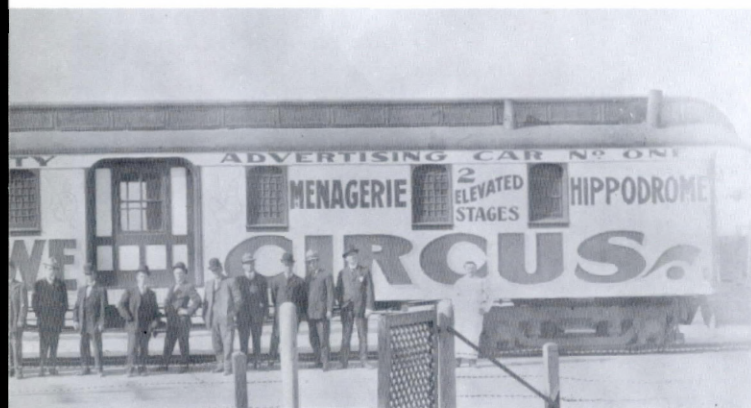


One of the cars used by the Adam Forepaugh Shows in 1892. Robert Good Collection.





# ANCE CARS



& Rowe Show  
middle door de-

This car was used by the Dode Fisk Circus in either 1909 or 1910. Woodcock Collection.



William Oliver, car manager is shown in front of the 1948 Dailey Bros. Circus car. Art Stensvad Photo.

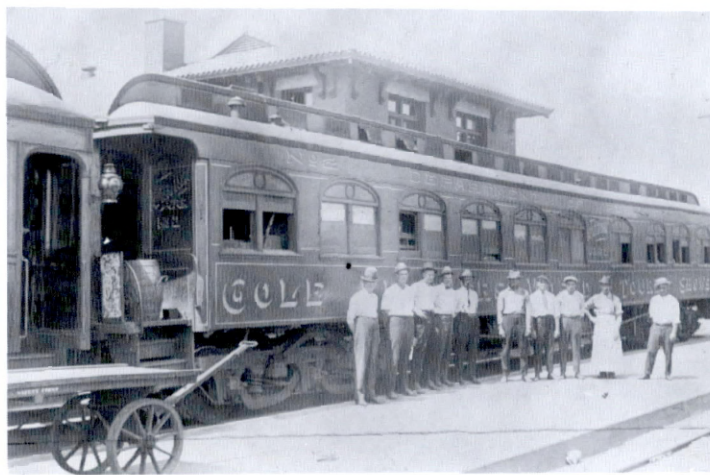
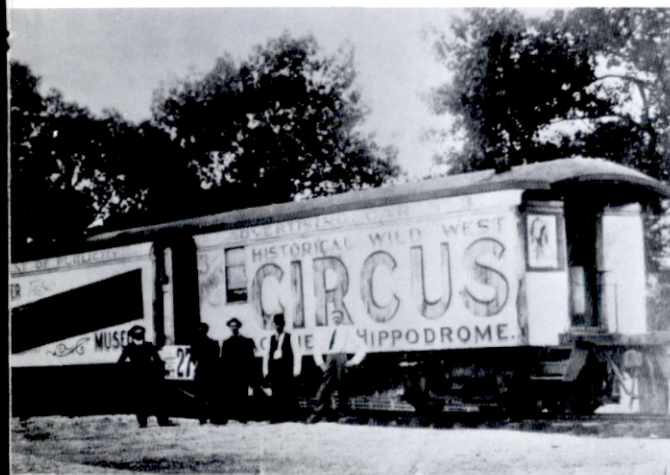


The advance car of the Buffalo Bill Wild West show is shown at the closing stand of the 1905 season in Marseilles, France. It is lettered in French. Pfening Collection.

Tiger Bill & George W. Hall Circus car No. 3 used during the 1910 season. Chindahl (Circus World Museum) Collection.

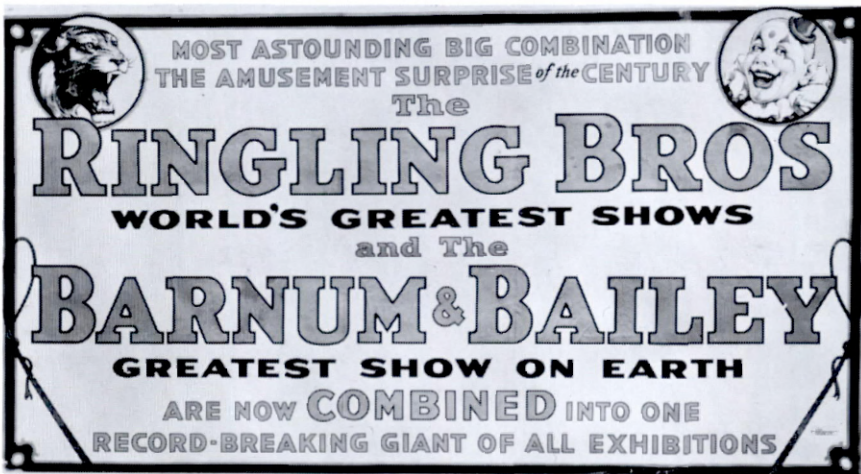
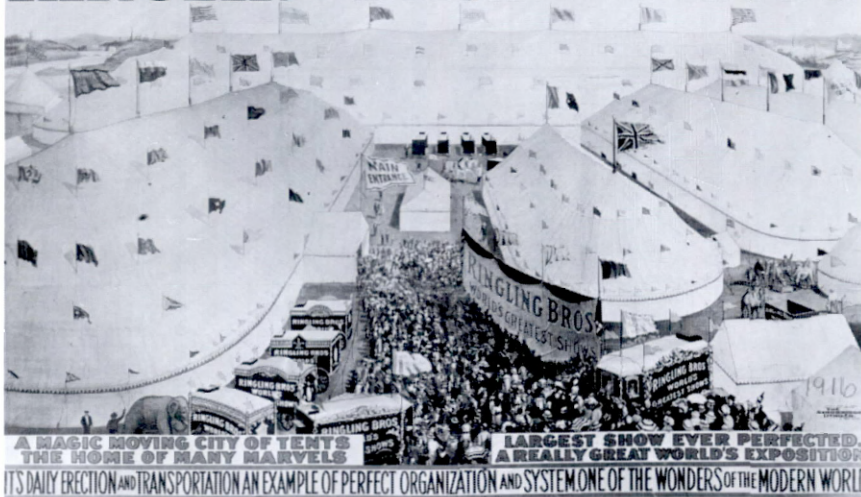
Cole Bros. World Toured Shows, owned by J. Augustus Jones, advertising car labeled

"Dept. of Publicity," in 1916. Woodcock Collection.





# SPECIAL CHEAP EXCURSIONS TO RINGLING BROS. WORLD'S GREATEST SHOWS



1915

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows and Spectacle Solomon and the Queen of Sheba.

Opened at Coliseum, Chicago.

Barnum & Bailey Greatest Show on Earth and Spectacular Pageant Lalla Rookh.

Opened at Madison Square Garden, N. Y.

1916

Twenty sheet poster announcing the combining of the Ringling and the Barnum circuses in 1919. Harold Dunn Collection.

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows and Spectacle Cinderella.

Opened at Coliseum, Chicago.

Barnum & Bailey Greatest Show on Earth and Spectacular Pageant Persia.

Opened at Madison Square Garden, N. Y.

1917

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows and Spectacle Cinderella.

Opened at Coliseum, Chicago.

Barnum & Bailey Greatest Show on Earth and Spectacle Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp.

Opened at Madison Square Garden, N. Y.

1918

Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows and Spectacle in Days of Old.

Opened at Coliseum, Chicago.

At the close of the season Ringling Bros. Circus, which since 1884 had annually gone into established winter quarters at Baraboo, Wis., moved in to winter quarters at Bridgeport, Conn.

Barnum & Bailey Greatest Show on Earth and Spectacle Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp.

Opened at Madison Square Garden, N. Y.

1919

Ringling Bros. & Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows featuring trade names and titles World's Greatest Shows and Greatest Show on Earth.

Opened at Madison Square Garden, N. Y.

Went out as a 92 car show.

On October 21st Alf T. Ringling died and by his will his son Richard T. Ringling succeeded him as equal owner in the co-partnership of Ringling Bros.

1920

Ringling Bros. & Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows featuring trade names and titles World's Greatest Shows and Greatest Show on Earth.

Opened at Madison Square Garden, N. Y.

1921

Ringling Bros. & Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows featuring trade names and titles World's Greatest Shows and Greatest Show on Earth.

Opened at Madison Square Garden, N. Y.

Went out as a 95 car show.

1922

Ringling Bros. & Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows featuring trade names and titles World's Greatest Show on Earth.

Opened at Madison Square Garden, N. Y.

Went out as a 100 car show.<sup>1</sup>

## To Be Continued

1. Kelly evidently took his information for the yearly notes on the Ringling show from a route book published by the show in 1914 that contained the route and other information concerning the show each season from 1882 until 1914. He would have had little trouble gathering the information for the 1915 through 1922 seasons.



# Perrine Dog & Pony Show Season of 1915

Ralph F. Skidmore

*Before I begin, I would like to thank the following people for their help in making this article possible. Fay Juckett who was a member of the 1915 Band on this show. His Band pictures and information about the 1915 season were of great help to me in preparing this article. Marie Tracy for her information and pictures. Mrs. Tracy was a member of this show from 1910 through 1914. Also CHS member Bob Harrison for putting me in touch with Mr. Juckett.*

The 1915 Perrine Dog & Pony Show was put on the road by Grace Perrine, the widow of Dave W. Perrine, who died Oct. 23, 1913. The year 1899 is as far back as I can trace Dave Perrine, but he had a show on the road from that time until his death. Information about his earlier shows is rather hard to find although all of his shows were of the Dog & Pony or Wild West Show variety. Until his death Dave Perrine also put on most of the performance. He was a wire walker, could do a double or single trap act, and trained the dogs and ponies.

The show wintered on the Perrine farm 5 miles from Eaton Rapids, Mich. From 1910 through 1914 the show was called the Bronco Joe Wild West Show. For 1915 it went out as the Perrine Dog & Pony Show using the repainted Bronco Joe equipment.

The show traveled on about 20 wagons. There were 2 cages, 2 tableau wagons, 1 band and 1 piano wagon. The rest of the wagons hauled the equipment and personnel. The show used a 50 ft. round with a 40 ft. middle for the big top. The performance

was given in a 30 ft. ring. There also was a band top, stable top, and a dining tent.

General manager for the 1915 season was Wurt Brian who in earlier years had been a clown. Boss canvas man was Lee Colby and the advance was handled by William Garnett.

For 1915 the show stayed in Mich. for the full season. After the evening performance all of the equipment was loaded in the wagons except for the band top which the band slept in. The married couples slept in their own wagons. Early in the morning they traveled to the next town.

Fay Juckett recalled that on the night of June 21st at Reese, Mich., the band top was pitched next to some railroad tracks. When the band got up in the morning Lane Raby's clothes were missing. Mr. Juckett had to go into town and buy him some new ones before he would come out of the band top. Apparently some hobo had himself a different set of clothes.

The Perrine show never played on a Sunday. After the Saturday night performance they would load up and then on Sunday travel to the next town.

The band started the 1915 season with nine members. On June 21st Harry Sipe the band leader quit. When he left the show his son went with him. Sometime before July 25th Billy Laduke, the bass drummer, quit and was replaced by Fred Snyder. Fred Snyder was the brother-in-law of Dave Perrine having married

Dave's wife's sister Ellma. The band finished the season with seven members. The nine members of the band that started the season are listed here along with the instrument they played.

Harry Sipe — Coronet — Band Leader  
Harvey Reed — Coronet  
Leon Sipe — E Flat Alto Horn  
Dude Collier — Trombone  
Archie Hoegarth — Trombone  
Fay Juckett — Baritone  
Lane Raby — Bass  
Tony Cross — Snare Drum  
Billy Laduke — Bass Drum

A parade was always a part of the Perrine Show and from the parade line-up that follows it was a pretty good parade for the size of towns they played.

## Parade of the 1915 Perrine Dog & Pony Show

1. Grace Perrine riding her horse Black Diamond.
  2. Bandwagon pulled by 2 horses (Dynamite & Buddy)
  3. 2 men and 2 women riders on horses.
  4. Tableau wagon pulled by 2 horses.
  5. 2 men and 2 women riders on horses.
  6. Cage (2 sections) monkeys and dogs 4 pony hitch.
  7. Tableau wagon pulled by 2 horses.
  8. Cage 1 bear pulled by 6 pony hitch.
  9. Piano wagon pulled by 2 horses.
  10. Clown wagon pulled by 1 mule.
- On June 4th at Applegate, Mich., Mr. Juckett remembers that when they returned from parading the cook tent had been on fire. It wasn't any-

Lot view of the show between 1910 and 1914 when it was called the Bronco Joe Wild West Show. Photo courtesy Marie Tracy.







thing too serious, but they always ate after the parade and the band being a hungry bunch hoped that dinner hadn't burned up. Of course they already knew that dinner was going to be eggs, the menu never changed. Dude Collier's wife did the cooking on the show and had the popcorn during the performance.

For the performance the show had a pretty good line-up of acts. Of the 14 acts on the program Grace Perrine was in three of them and Arzeno Selden four. Arzeno Selden was quite a performer, I'm sure some of the members can remember "Selden the Stratosphere Man."

#### The Program

1. Entry Drill.
2. Juggling — Tony Cross.
3. Contortion Act—Arzeno Selden and wife.
4. Clown — Lee Paramlie.
5. Pony liberty act presented by Grace Perrine, 12 ponies.
6. Double trap act—Arzeno Selden and wife.
7. Dog act — presented by Grace Perrine.
8. Revolving ladder act — Arzeno Selden and wife.
9. Pony drill — presented by Grace Perrine, 16 ponies.
10. High diving dog act.
11. Bear act — presented by Lee Paramlie.
12. Perch act—Arzeno Selden and wife.
13. Educated horse act.
14. January act.

Arzeno Selden could also do a wire walking act if the need should arise.

This was the last season for the Perrine Dog & Pony Show. After the opening stand at Eaton Rapids the weather was a mess and business bad. Up until July 4th the weather was rainy and cold. Business in the latter part of the season picked up but not enough to make up for the earlier

Early season photo of the 1915 band. Mr. Juckett is the third from the left in this photo. Photo courtesy Fay Juckett.



Grace Perrine as she appeared in later years on the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus. Photo courtesy Marie Tracy.

Bandwagon for the 1915 season. The color of this wagon was red with silver carvings and yellow undergear. Photo courtesy Fay Juckett.



season losses. When the show went back to winter quarters the equipment was sold. The piano wagon, a couple of the baggage wagons, and the seating went to the Tracy-Miller Show. Someone in Eaton Rapids still has the piano out of this wagon. Some of the other wagons and equipment could have gone to the Tiger Bill Show.

After the equipment was sold I haven't been able to track it down, except for the piano wagon.

Grace Perrine never had another show on the road. In the following years she had a menage act on the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus.

#### Perrine Dog & Pony Show — Route Season of 1915 April

23 — Left the farm for opening stand at Eaton Rapids, Mich.

- 24 — Eaton Rapids — 5 miles
- 25 — Sunday
- 26 — Leslie — 16 miles
- 27 — Stockbridge — 15 miles
- 28 — Pinckney — 14 miles
- 29 — Howell — 12 miles
- 30 — Brighton — 10 miles

#### May

- 1 — South Lyons — 10 miles
- 2 — Sunday
- 3 — Northville — 10 miles
- 4 — Plymouth — 4 miles
- 5 — Wayne — 10 miles
- 6 — Romelus — 4½ miles
- 7 — Charleton — 15 miles
- 8 — Flat Rock — 7 miles
- 9 — Sunday
- 10 — Trenton — 11 miles
- 11 — Dearborne — 18 miles
- 12 — Redford — 10 miles
- 13 — Royal Oak — 12 miles
- 14 — Birmingham — 7 miles
- 15 — Rochester — 14 miles
- 16 — Sunday
- 17 — Utica — 8 miles
- 18 — Warren — 7 miles
- 19 — Frazer — 5 miles
- 20 — New Baltimore — 5 miles
- 21 — New Haven — 4½ miles
- 22 — Richmond — 6 miles
- 23 — Sunday
- 24 — Armada — 8 miles
- 25 — Romeo — 8 miles
- 26 — Almont — 9 miles
- 27 — Capac — 11 miles
- 28 — Emmitt — 9 miles





- 29 — Avoca — 9 miles
- 30 — Sunday
- 31 — Yale — 10 miles

June

- 1 — Brown City — 16 miles
- 2 — Peck — 12 miles
- 3 — Crosswell — 10½ miles
- 4 — Applegate — 6 miles (Cook tent caught fire)
- 5 — Carsonville — 6 miles
- 6 — Sunday
- 7 — Dickerville — 10 miles
- 8 — Mindon City — 12 miles
- 9 — Ruth — 6 miles
- 10 — Harbor Beach — 12 miles
- 11 — Port Hope — 9 miles
- 12 — Kinde — 14 miles
- 13 — Sunday
- 14 — Port Austin — 9 miles
- 15 — Pinnebog — 12 miles
- 16 — Elkton — 12 miles
- 17 — Owendale — 10 miles
- 18 — Unionville — 7 miles (No show because of heavy rain)
- 19 — Fairgrove — 12 miles
- 20 — Sunday
- 21 — Reese — 12 miles (Harry Sipe the Band Leader quit. Lane Rabey's cloths were stolen.)
- 22 — Frankenmuth — 9 miles
- 23 — Clio — 11 miles
- 24 — Mt. Rose — 8 miles
- 25 — Flushing — 9 miles
- 26 — Swartz Creek — 9 miles
- 27 — Sunday
- 28 — Durand — 11 miles
- 29 — Vernon — 4 miles
- 30 — Lennon — 8 miles

July

- 1 — New Lathrop — 15 miles
- 2 — Chesaning — 12 miles
- 3 — St. Charles — 9 miles
- 4 — Sunday
- 5 — Hemlock — 12 miles
- 6 — Merrill — 5 miles
- 7 — Breckenridge — 7½ miles
- 8 — Elwell — 15 miles
- 9 — Vestaburg — 9 miles

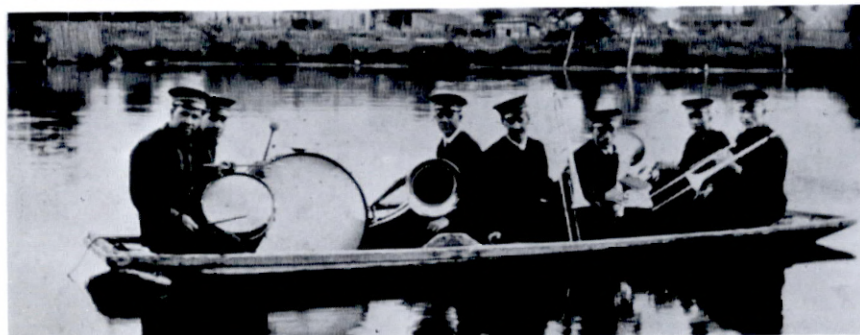
**Dave Perrine was part owner of the Freed & Perrine United Shows, prior to the Bronco Joe Wild West. This photo shows the lot of the Freed & Perrine circus in 1906 or 1907. Pfening Collection.**

- 10 — Edmore — 8 miles
- 11 — Sunday
- 12 — Blanchard — 9 miles
- 13 — Remus — 9 miles
- 14 — Micosta — 5½ miles
- 15 — Barryton — 12 miles
- 16 — Weedman — 15 miles
- 17 — Millbrook — 8 miles
- 18 — Sunday
- 19 — Sixlakes — 12 miles
- 20 — Lakeview — 6 miles
- 21 — Howard City — 12 miles
- 22 — Morley — 9 miles
- 23 — Stanwood — 6 miles
- 24 — Paris — 17 miles
- 25 — Sunday
- 26 — Hersey — 9 miles
- 27 — Reed City — 5 miles
- 28 — Le Roy — 15 miles
- 29 — Dighton — 9 miles
- 30 — Marion — 9 miles
- 31 — McBain — 10 miles

August

- 1 — Sunday
- 2 — Boon — 22 miles (There was a Hey Rube at this stand. Doc Pike, better known as Tiger Bill was visiting the show at this stand with a few of his friends. They helped rout the towners and get the show loaded and on it's way.)
- 3 — Harrietta — 6 miles
- 4 — Mesick — 11 miles

**These are the 7 members of the band that finished the 1915 season. Photo taken July 25, 1915 Hersey, Mich. Left to right the band members are Tony Cross, Fred Snyder, Lane Raby, Dude Collier, Fay Juckett, Harvey Reed and, Archy Hoegarth. Photo courtesy Fay Juckett.**



- 5 — Buckley
- 6 — Kingsley — 13 miles
- 7 — Grawn — 14 miles
- 8 — Sunday

9 — Honor — 22 miles (The show had a detour on this trek and it took them from 12 P.M. Sunday until 3:30 P.M. Monday to get to this stand.)

- 10 — Beulah — 6 miles
- 11 — Frankfort — 9 miles
- 12 — Arcadia — 12 miles
- 13 — Bear Lake — 9 miles
- 14 — Onokoma — 6 miles
- 15 — Sunday
- 16 — Fresnoil — 28 miles
- 17 — Fountain — 6 miles
- 18 — Scorrville — 12 miles
- 19 — Crystal Valley — 15 miles
- 20 — Pentwater — 11 miles
- 21 — Shelby — 14 miles
- 22 — Sunday
- 23 — North Muskegon — 34 miles
- 24 — Fruit Port — 15 miles
- 25 — Spring Lake — 6 miles
- 25 — Spring Lake — 6 miles
- 26 — Cooperville — 12 miles
- 27 — Grandville — 18 miles
- 28 — Byron Center — 10 miles
- 29 — Sunday
- 30 — Calidonia — 12 miles
- 31 — Freeport — 10 miles

September

- 1 — Woodland — 12 miles
- 2 — Vermontville — 11 miles
- 3 — Potterville — 13 miles
- 4 — Diamondale — 7 miles (Home run to Eaton Rapids — Winter Quarters was 9 miles.)

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# 1967 Circus Season In Review

by Tom Parkinson

This season brings to mind that early count-down:

"Ten little, nine little, eight little Indians . . ."

For the tented circus was in a sorry shape. Business for the individual shows reportedly was good; several show owners spoke about good profits on the season.

But fewer than ten tented circuses remained in active trouping. Such long-established titles as Mills Bros., Hunt Bros. and Beers-Barnes circuses disappeared from the roster. The once proud and powerful Kelly-Miller Circus was unrecognized by its former standards.

Best of the lot was the money-winning Clyde Beatty & Cole Bros. Circus, playing a route through the East, Midwest and South. Next was the hide-away Carson & Barnes Circus, relative newcomer yet last stand of certain procedures for unsponsored promotion. In the East were Hoxie Bros. Circus and Bartok Bros. Circus. Subsidiaries of Beatty-Cole were King Bros. and Sells & Gray. Clark & Walters played the Appalachian hills and South. Big John Strong Circus stayed to the Far West. A couple of others made brief seasons that hardly can count. If there was a note of hope for a rising trend it was the James Bros. Circus announcement that it would turn to tents next season.

Meanwhile, how the other half lives was illustrated by the indoor circuses. Once the threadbare cousins, now they represented the strength in the busi-

ness. Most continued playing under auspices that identified them as Shrine Circus, Police Circus and similar titles.

Biggest news bulletin of the year was the sale of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus.

Ringling-Barnum began its 97th season on January 10 and 11 at Venice, Fla. Hoxie Bros. got in a preview by playing Marathon, Fla., on the Florida Keys, in January. Herb Walters had a \$17,000 price tag on his Clark & Walters outfit in the barn at Ocala, Fla., and Milton (Doc) Bartok bought from Hunt Bros. a set of show plunder that included ten trucks, four elephants, seats, lights and a 110 with a 50. Hoxie had some Beers-Barnes animals. Von Bros. bought the Mills camel act. Ringling gave two old Hagenbeck-Wallace elephants, Trilby and Big Ruth, to the New Orleans zoo. Hubert Castle Circus, one of the comers among indoor operas, built new quarters at Seagoville, Texas.

In February, Bartok signed Harriet Beatty's Animals; the Castle show was in Portland, Ore., and Von Bros. announced plans to tour despite Henry Vonderheid's illness.

Polack Bros. was snowbound by a blizzard at Hammond, Ind., and the stand was lost for the time being. Pat Anthony was hurt in his wild

The historic signing of the contract of sale of the Ringling Bros. & Barnum and Bailey Circus, in Rome, Italy. Shown are Israel Feld, Judge Roy M. Hofheinz, John Ringling North and Irvin Feld. Photo from Ringling Circus.

animal act at Reading, February 26, with Polack Bros. Jon (Tarzan) Zerbinini was mauled by one of his ten lions at Cleveland. Hamid-Morton opened indoors at Oklahoma City. Ringling-Barnum scored well at Greenville and Greensboro. Out at Alamo, Texas, Little Bob Stevens was putting together another attempt, this one entitled Sells-Sterling Circus.

Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. Circus opened at Long Island Arena, New York, March 23 with snow on the ground but money in the wagon. It ran until April 2, then layed off at Wilson, N. C., to await tenting weather. Ringling was making Baltimore, Washington and Philadelphia before New York. Clyde Bros. opened at Savannah. Hamid-Morton won a new Kansas City contract. Carson & Barnes, in Oklahoma an Arkansas, had the old Kelly-Miller football-shaped big top. Kelly-Miller, in turn, gave up on ex-Hunt canvas and used an old Carson & Barnes top. At Lufkin, Texas, some K-M seats fell but not one was hurt seriously.

Ringling played its last stand in the old Madison Square Garden, April 4-May 26. The new Sells-Sterling with eight trucks and the former Fairyland tent was near collapse by April 8 in Beeville, Texas. Hoxie Bros. opened April 3 at Naples, Fla. King Bros. was in Georgia and Kelly-Miller in Mississippi for April. John Frazier and Chuck Fuller were in charge on Carson-Barnes while Jack Moore was away. Beatty-Cole opened its tent tour April 26 at Petersburg, Va. Bartok began touring from Burlington, N. J., quarters where it took over Hunt equipment. The first town was Dover, Del., April 22. That show was on 12 trucks and under a 110 with one fifty. Dealer Johnny Canole was disposing of Beers-Barnes trucks.

Jack Mills was restless and rumors developed about his Mills show going indoors, going to the Orient and merging with someone else. He bought 25,000 routing arrows, but no route developed. In late April, Henry Vonderheid died and his widow continued with the show. The Beatty-Cole plans to contract Cicero, Ill., were dropped because of reports that Negro leader Martin Luther King planned a campaign there in the summer.

In May Carson-Barnes was in Missouri with 26 lions, 18 trucks, 5 elephants, a hippo, and radio-TV star Sky King. Montreal's Expo '67 had scared Sells & Gray away from its usual route in Canada and Northeastern U.S., so the show was in Indiana and Illinois after winning good Ohio crowds. Jack and Jean Gobble tried to keep Sells-Sterling going, but it soon folded. Hoxie Bros. was endangered by a forest fire at Baxley, Ga.





Also in May, Ringling-Barnum moved to the Montreal fair for May 16-28, to play 26 performances in front of 25,000 seats. Howard Suesz achieved the indoor coup of the year when the Chicago Shrine Temple announced it would contract with his Clyde Bros. instead of Polack Bros. for 1968. In Detroit, the Shrine quit Al Dobritch in favor of L. N. Fleckles. Dobritch came back with Grotto auspices in the Motor City but blew a reported \$85,000 in the opposition stand May 26-June 4. Chicago Stadium owners revived Barnes Bros. Circus for a short run. James Bros. played a big date for the Los Angeles firemen and promised them a tent for next season. The show's quarters were in Martinez, Calif. Ringling-Barnum came to Detroit on the heels of the Shrine and Grotto shows and during the Ford Motor strike but scored the best business it had enjoyed there in several seasons.

Herb Walters, having tried a stationary set-up at a Florida amusement park, took to the road with the hope for better luck. By May he had the show in Kentucky playing two-day stands because help was so short and routing so rugged. About that time, Gene Christian moved from Sells-Gray to Clark & Walters, became the agent and cancelled some Indiana time in order to play mountain country of West Virginia. The show began to get business and resumed one-day stands.

Von Bros. closed when Mrs. Henry Vonderheid decided not to continue the effort. Kelly-Miller Circus lost four days to blowdowns in Iowa and its old Carson-Barnes top was ripped badly. Superintendent Paul Pyle was reported off of the K-M show for a while after that, but later he resumed with the outfit. Obert Miller was on the show and getting first count.

Ringling finally got a couple of good days at Montreal's Expo '67. After several days were blanks in cold rain. Then the show hopped to Houston to play the Astrodome June 22-25. The circus framed by Art Concello for the Madison Square Garden company sailed from Brooklyn en route to Russia; some personnel also would fly.

By late June Herb Walters had sold his Clark & Walters to the Silverlake Family. Clark & Walters consisted of a 70 with three 30s, five trucks and three elephants, and the circus world heard a report that the sale price for the works had been \$10,000.

The Hubert Castle show won the Pacific National Exposition date at Vancouver for June-July; Polack had played it in the past. Tom Packs opened its season in Missouri. James Bros. played Enid, Okla. King Bros.



The walkthrough marquee of the Carson & Barnes Circus is shown during an Indiana stand in August of 1967. Pfening Photo.

announced a route of 19 stands on Long Island for August.

July brought word that Karl Walenda would discontinue his partnership with May Wirth in operation of the old Frank Wirth dates and that he would devote full time to the Tom Packs Circus. On July 3 in Manchester, N. H., the Beatty-Cole big top went down in the mud, so the date was blown. Bartok Bros., reporting good business in the East, had a former Mills Bros. side show top that it got from Von Bros. Harriet Beatty and her cat act quit the Bartok circus.

In July Sells & Gray was faced with mounting routing problems. The show was catching up with its advance. Bob Couls left and joined Kelly-Miller. Soon the Corporation assigned the Sells & Gray routing chores to Floyd King along with those

The cook house of the Hoxie Bros. Circus is shown here during the June 10th stand at Phillippi, West, Va. Melvin J. Olsen Photo.



of Beatty-Cole and King Bros. His contracting agents were diverted to routing the Sells & Gray show and soon headed it for tobacco country. The show used an 80 with three 30s plus a side show top, all spooled on the same Sanguin truck. The spool also was used to tie off the jigger rope as a new development in push-pole operation. The outfit's nine trucks included a flat bed that once was Luke Anderson's hippo den. There also were two trailers on the show.

Ringling-Barnum was at Phoenix July 12-16 and Los Angeles July 19-August 1. There was fear a railroad strike would trap the circus but the strike ended just in time for the jump to Los Angeles.

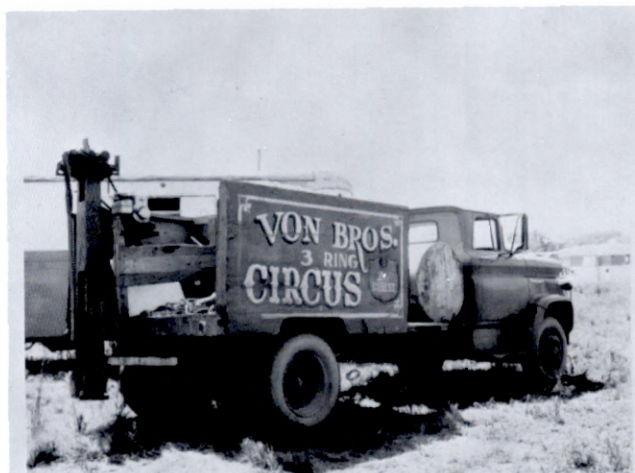
By this time reports were circulated that Irving Feld was trying to buy the Ringling show in partnership with Broadway producers Cy Feuer and Ernest Martin. He confirmed that he had been in contact with John Ringling North on the matter but said that other comment was premature.

In August the Beatty show told of having played to seven turnaways at Buffalo. Its Philadelphia stand, using





Al G. Kelly & Miller Bros. Circue ticket wagon, Indianapolis, Ind. Pfening Photo.



The stake driver of the Von Bros. Circus is show in a photo taken in Dallas, Penna., on

June 6, the show closed the following day. Melvin J. Olsen Photo.

a new lot, had been powerful. At Milwaukee the show had a \$56,000 advance sale.

Whlie R-B was in Los Angeles, Klaudiusz Blaszcak, Polish performer, defected from his homeland and sought asylum in the U.S.; he was employed at Jungleland in the Los Angeles suburbs. Ringling's Los Angeles attendance topped 178,000 persons but was off from last year. Long Beach also was off, and Anaheim, third stand in the area, was a new addition. The three-way combination grossed a big \$800,000. During the run, Al Dobritch sued the show because one of Ringling's acts was billed under the Dobritch name.

In September, Beatty-Cole was in Wisconsin, John Strong in Oregon, Kelly-Miller in Mississippi, King Bros. in Virginia, Sells & Gray in South Carolina and the Clark & Walters advance was leaving North Carolina

to try Texas. King Bros. was on 10 trucks, with two bulls and a 80 with three 40s; manager James M. Cole reported a profitable tour. There was September word that John Ringling North and the 49ers had committed themselves to selling the circus. Sells & Gray manager Bill English underwent surgery in September. The Moscow Circus, which opened at Montreal September 26 had played Toronto and was in New York through October 15, the first of a national tour.

During October Jack Mills returned from Czechoslovakia, where he had conferred about hiring acts. The Mills winter quarters were moved to Can-

ton, Ohio, after the old Jefferson deal ended. Jake Mills was on the staff of the U.S. circus in Russia. The Mills elephants were sold to Mexico's Atayde Bros. Circus.

Clyde Bros. began a long run in Mexico City. Art Concello came back from the U.S. Circus in Russia to manage the Russian circus in the U.S. Ringling-Barnum won good business in Chicago. The Sells & Gray shift to Carolina country crowded the Bartok Bros. Circus out of that area. So Bartok jumped from Greensboro, N.C., to Savannah Beach, Ga., and later played two weeks in Florida, where it ran into troubles from some sponsors and from claims against an earlier circus.

In November there were reports that Mills Bros. contemplated a new indoor show with a train. Polack Bros. extended its season beyond normal closing dates to make up the Hammond, Ind., stand lost earlier to a blizzard. The Moscow Circus was getting only fair business after Philadelphia and Boston; Baltimore was a disappointment. James Bros. Circus bought five trucks and the former Mills Bros. canvas owned by Larry Higgins.

After scores of rumors over many years, John Ringling North and the other Ringling family stockholders actually sold the Big One. The deal was consummated in Rome. Selling price was about \$8,000,000.

John North sold 450 shares of his own and 60 shares from his mother's estate. Dan Gordon Judge sold 315 shares for the Edith Ringling Estate and 175 shares for the Robert Ringling Estate. John and Henry North and Rudy Bundy were to be retained on the circus staff, it was stated.

Buyer of the show was Hoffeld Corporation, a combination of Irvin Feld, Israel Feld and Judge Roy M.

The ticket wagon of the Clark & Walters Circus, June 12, 1967, in Crothersville, Ind. Note the layout of the reserve seats painted on the foldout at back of the wagon. Melvin J. Olsen Photo.







Hofheinz, the Houston developer of the Astrodome. Few if any of the earlier rumors had mentioned Hofheinz. There were unofficial reports that sale of the show has been hastened by new threats of legal actions by the Fortv-Niners.

If anyone thought the sale would end "Ringling wrangling," they were soon to be disappointed, for two possible battles loomed almost at once. For one, Cy Feuer and Ernest Martin said they had made a deal with the Felds to buy the show. Now they sued to set aside the sale to Hoffeld, saying they had come to agreement earlier for buying the show.

For the other possible friction, it was noted by Madison Square Garden representatives that no contract yet had been signed with Ringling for next season. The new Garden then would be in use. There was some speculation about whether the Garden and the Astrodome were on the verge of a dispute about circus dates and circus plans.

During the season's final weeks,

The Bartok Circus light plant is shown during the June 5, engagement in Willingboro, N. J. Melvin J. Olsen Photo.

word came that the King show did well in the North and lost some of the profits en route home. Similarly, Hoxie Bros. Circus lost some of its Northern profits as it headed for Florida quarters. The show was home a winner, however, and planned to buy a new tent. Bartok's circus went into Oneco quarters with four elephants and a reported 40 G's. Sid Kellner and Smokie Jones, of the James Bros. Circus, went to Thailand to buy as many as ten elephants for the new year. Clark & Walters closed Thanksgiving Day at Westlake, La. Bill English was said to be out of the Sells & Gray show for next year, and several possibilities were rumored as the new manager. Among them was Wilson Storey. Jack Moore got his Carson & Barnes Circus at home in Hugo, then he underwent major surgery.

Kelly-Miller Circus passed to the full control of Joe McMahon. D. R. Miller pulled his six elephants and five lions off of the show and into Hugo quarters. Bob Couls booked a set of indoor dates under the Kelly-Miller title in Oklahoma and Kansas. McMahon took his show to Ocean Springs, Miss., for quarters and hinted of plans to open early in Rio Grande Valley territory.

Deaths during the year included Everrett Hart, F. S. Wolcott, Lee Bradley, Walter Klausner, Frank A. Robbins Jr., Eddie (Billette) Hebel, Ira Watts, Rudy Rudynoff, Martha Henderson, Herman Joseph, Tom McLaughlin, Normal Carroll, Maurice Marmolejo, Fats Brazon, Nellie Vaughn, Merritt Belew, Buck Reger, Jay Gould, Ray Marlowe, Siamese twins Margaret and Mary Gibb, and Henry Vonderheid.

## PERU BUYS MUSEUM BUILDING

The Peru Circus City Festival is growing. After many years of work on the part of a number of people two significant steps have been taken.

Larry Camp, Florida State University graduate student and a veteran of the FSU amateur circus, has been hired as a full time trainer.

A permanent building has been purchased at the corner of 7th and Broadway in Peru. It is large enough for a museum display as well as the staging of the annual three ring circus. The circus and museum displays will be held there during the festival days July 17 through 20, 1968.

The interior of the building will be remodeled to simulate the inside of a big top.

A capital fund drive was organized with the 1967 goal set at \$40,000. This effort resulted in an astounding \$50,000, showing that the citizens and merchants are really behind the Circus City Festival.

Interest was further shown by attendance of about 10,000 at the performances of the 1967 circus.

Contributions from circus fans and historians throughout the United States will be gratefully received by Festival officials. All gifts are tax deductible and can be sent to Circus City Festival, Inc., Building Fund, P.O. Box 482, Peru, Indiana 46970.

## CIRCUS HALL OF FAME AWARDS ANNOUNCED

At the opening performance of the Ringling-Barnum Circus, in Venice, Florida, on January 12, 1968, four circus greats were named to the Circus Hall of Fame.

On hand to receive their awards were William C. Heyer, Jr., horseman, Elly Ardelty, single trap artist, and acrobat Ernest Schlee Millette. Also selected this year was Edwin "Poodles" Hanneford comedy bareback rider, who died on December 9, 1967. The awards were presented by Col. William Naramore. The following members of the National Awards Selection Committee were present, Earl M. Allen, Sikeston, Missouri, Forrest L. Morell, Phoenix, Arizona and Fred D. Pfening, Columbus, Ohio.

Capt. Hoyer came to the United States in 1937 to appear in the Ringling-Barnum circus, he continued with that show for many years.

Miss Ardelty was brought to America by John Ringling North in 1940 and appeared with the "big one" for five years.

Ernest Millette appeared with the Forepaugh-Sells, William P. Hall, J. H. LaPearl and Ringling Bros. circuses.

Mr. Hanneford came to the U. S. in 1915 with the Hanneford Family to joining the Barnum & Bailey show. He later appeared with Hagenbeck-Wallace, A. G. Barnes and Downie Bros. Circuses.

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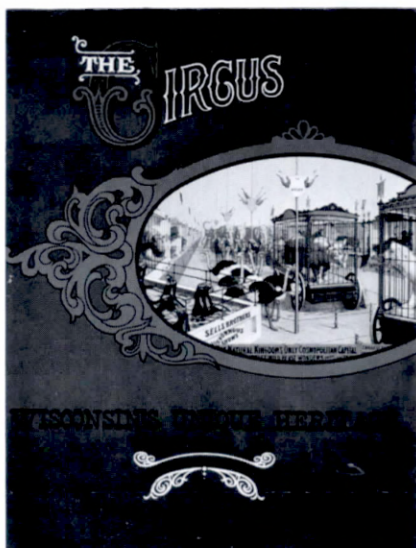
By Richard E. Conover

Richard E. Conover is the leading historian of the circus in the world today. Since the publication of "The Origin of the John Robinson Circus and the Myth of 1824," in the *Bandwagon* for June 1953, almost every article or book he has published has been of major importance. His latest effort *Wisconsin's Unique Heritage* is certainly no exception.

Although it is not as detailed or complex as some of his papers on circus parades (*The Telescoping Tableaus*, "The Allegorical Pony-Drawn Parade Floats"), this book is nevertheless the best piece ever written on the circus in Wisconsin, and contains a wealth of valuable and new information.

This forty-eight page book has catalogued all the circuses that either started in Wisconsin or spent most of their existence there. It is arranged alphabetically by cities and starts with Antigo, Wisconsin, and the Burns, Boldt, and Hanus Dog and Pony Show; and concludes with Wone-woc, Wisconsin, and a page concerning the Dode Fisk Circus. In all, Conover's computation includes twenty-eight cities and upwards of eighty-nine different titles with information ranging from a line on the Rock and Cook Shows, to four pages on W. C. Coup.

I particularly reveled in his denunciation of P. T. Barnum in the section on Delevan and W. C. Coup. According to tradition, some circus historians, and his autobiography, P. T. Barnum was the greatest circusman who ever lived. "Not so!" says Conover, and he goes on to prove it quite convincingly. He points out that Barnum was a great promoter as reflected in his successes with Jenny Lind, Tom Thumb, and his famous American Museum; however, more importantly, he shows that it was W. C. Coup who made the Barnum Circus in 1871 such a success. According to the author, the P. T. Barnum Circus of 1871 was little more than the Dan Castello Circus of the previous year with a new paint



job and the addition of a few museum attractions that had lost interest in Barnum's New York Museum. Perhaps the portion on Coup and Barnum is best summed-up by Conover's statement that: "Contrary to popular conception, Phineas T. Barnum was not in any sense a circus man."

Although the section on Coup is probably the most historically significant, the author has not let it overshadow the other Delavan Shows. Almost one-third of the entire book is devoted to Delavan Circuses from the Buckley Circus to the Mabie Bros. I found the section on the Mabie Circus one of the most interesting in the

book. After examining a rare receipt book from the show in 1863, the author has concluded that the Mabie had grift that season. This is the earliest reference I have ever heard of grift on a circus.

The book does not include just circus, but also some allied fields. There is a fine article on the Moeller wagon works in Baraboo, and another on the Cardiff Giant, which by the way, has a direct link to the city of Baraboo.

The pictures in the book are superb; many of them are valuable research documents. For example, in the section on Burr Robbins is the only known picture of the bandwagon that later appeared on the Ringling and Welsh Bros. shows while it was definitely on Burr Robbins. The picture of the W. C. Coup walk through show has never appeared in print before, nor has the group of the parade of the George W. Hall Circus.

Many fine items of circusana have been reproduced in this book: two Ringling letterheads, a Great Eastern poster, some Mabie Bros. newspaper ads, heralds from the George W. Hall and Burr Robbins Circuses, and many more.

Published in Baraboo by the Circus World Museum, this is one fine circus book. It combines an excellent historical text with over seventy-five illustrations, many of which are new. Its price of \$2.75 is quite reasonable. After reading this book, you, too, will agree that the circus is most assuredly Wisconsin's Unique Heritage.  
— F. D. P. III

## Questions and Comments

Hall Farm July-August 1966 Issue  
I have reread your very fine article.

In various places in the article certain facts seem vague, so perhaps I can clear these up with a bit of fact long ago passed on to me by the late Bill Woodcock.

The Dave Gillespie Circus is supposed to be one of the very first truck shows, likely on Model T Fords as it made the Kentucky, etc. hill country. As the legend goes, Gillespie shot a man during a "hey

rube" and had to "hot foot it to the talls." Hall's bull was also shot and killed during this clem. Gillespie sent word to Hall that he wanted to sell the show and to send someone down with the folding money. He also gave instructions on how to reach him personally as he dare not venture onto the show lots. Hall wasn't interested as he figured it was worthless, but passed on the information to a druggist in Lancaster who had the circus owner bug. The druggist took off for the



Kentucky wilds and in the dead of night, as per suggestion, met Gillespie who looked like a wild man. His beard and hair were snarled, untrimmed and filthy, as were his clothing and body. After a bit of haggling and with considerable fright for himself, the druggist bought the show, actually sight unseen. If there ever was a mess of garbage, this was it, and he loaded the top, seats and the old hand crank mechanical organ into a box

serves, Sig passed on in 1928, well up in his 80's.

As for the Palmer Bros. circus, I do not believe this ever returned to Lancaster. Instead it was moved to California and became Golden Bros.

As for the Buck Jones show, that was a nightmare. Jones had used poor judgement in picking staffers and many knew nothing about the circus business and several of those that were hep, set out

vas went for a couple of dollars and were later seen in use on hay stacks. Seat plank later was noted in the form of chicken sheds, etc. When orders came through to pick up the flats, Bill Woodcock and a couple other boys unloaded the wagons and lined them up along the siding. Many of them lay there until rotted away.

Everyone has to give Buck Jones credit for trying to be a right guy. He spent the rest of his life repaying those who had tossed in money to build and keep the show going. At the time of his death in the Coconut Grove fire, he had repaid most of the wild west show debts.

Art (Doc) Miller



This "new" photo of Buck Jones wagons at the Hall Farm was loaned by The Ringling Circus Museum, Sarasota, Fla.

car and shipped it to Lancaster. The trucks were in such a deplorable condition that the new owner just abandoned them on the show lot. What he did ship hardly occupied a quarter of a 40 foot box car.

A number of towners, also circus minded, turned out to watch the car being unloaded and the laughter was so great at ever bothering to buy such worthless raggy canvas, etc. that the druggist never did live down his poor judgement. For a long time the organ, similar to those found in the average low class brothel, lay in the Hall barn and was often pointed out to visitors with the remark: — "Say did you ever see the Dave Gillespie circus equipment?" Whether Hall had already received enough lease money on the nasty and dangerous bull to feel he was even on the deal is not known.

— Art (Doc) Miller

#### Comments on Various Articles

Regarding the Forepaugh equipment. An old Al G. Barnes troupier, claimed that Al G. picked up some wagons at that auction, perhaps also canvas, etc.

In reference to the Sig Sautelle circus going on rails in 1913. The Sautelle show was on rails in 1904 or '05 as I have the season route of same. Incidentally after the big Sautelle railer was done, Sig had a two-car show which folded in mid-season in 1919 and was auctioned off in Red Lion, Pa. From then on, Sig seemed to be around carnivals in side shows, doing magic. The late Carrol Miller once told me that Sig taught him the famous silver dollar palming trick. If memory

to get first count on the money. Even before the show opened, Buck made a contact with all those who put money in the show, for more funds. Business in the west was nil, and more money was grudgingly forthcoming to get it east in a hurry. On this fast trek, the show almost wild-catted and paper was not far enough ahead. In Illinois while our show was on a siding, an eastbound passenger train with the Jones advance car passed us enroute to, I recall Decatur. However, the billers just walked off and no paper was posted, or newspaper ads set. The show pulled in just a few days later only to learn that the town hadn't even been contracted.

By this time all stockholders were bitter and refused to kick in any more money. In addition there were so many attachments against the various stockholders, that no one dare admit they owned a chunk of it. This information was passed on to me by two of the boys who came over on the Princess Olga Shows and worked for me.

Perhaps the show was sent to Lancaster in the hopes of reorganizing, but regardless, the train was moved 'on the cuff' and it is doubtful if the RR's in question ever received payment.

Pay days had been almost nil and everyone still "with it" were surly and bitter when the show landed at the Hall siding. Wholesale plundering of everything began and those stockholders on hand, didn't dare utter a beef as several persons were present with attachments ready to serve on them. Team harness was peddled to various nearby farmers for a dollar or so a set, the light plants were ripped out of the coaches and sold by employees for \$5.00 or what ever they could secure. Chaffing bags of can-

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The eight members of the band of the Reed's European Circus are shown in front of a typical mud show band wagon. Most overland circuses paraded using light shell bandwagons like this one. This photo was taken in 1902. Burt Wilson Collection.